

# CONSCIENCE

It's Nature and Corruption, with it's repairs and means to inform it aright.

IN A  
VINDICATION  
OF THE  
PUBLICK PRAYERS  
AND  
CEREMONIES  
Of the Church of  
ENGLAND.

Made known to the famous foreign Divines,  
and by them approved.

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By ANTHONY CADE B. D.

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2 Cor. 1. 12.

*Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity,  
and Godly sincerity, not with fleshy wisdoms, &c.*

1 Cor. 14. 40.

*Let all things be done decently and in order.*

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L O N D O N,

Printed for JOHN WILLIAMS at the Crown in  
St. Paul's Church-yard. 1661.

CONSCIENCE  
 Its Name and Corruption with its  
 VINDICATION  
 OF THE  
 PUBLIC PRAYERS  
 AND  
 CEREMONIES  
 OF THE  
 ENGLAND



As shown to the several foreign Divines  
 and is approved  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 L. ANTHONY CARR, D.D.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 A. COLLIER  
 Overseeing the printing of the English Prayer Book in England  
 and other printing at Cambridge, London, &c.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 L. COLLIER  
 The printing is done at Cambridge and in other  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 L. COLLIER  
 Printed for JOHN WILKINS at the Church in  
 St. Paul's Churchyard 1661



TO  
THE RIGHT  
REVEREND FA-  
THER IN GOD,  
JOHN,  
LORD BISHOP OF  
LINCOLN, MY VERY  
good Lord and Patron.

**R**ight Reverend Father in God, I  
have often with great comfort re-  
lated among my friends what I ob-  
served about five yeares agoe at  
my being at Buckden (an ancient  
house belonging to the Bishoprick of Lincoln) how  
bare, naked, and ruinous I had seen it in former  
times; and now worthily repaired and adorned by  
your Lordship: The cloisters fairly pargetted and  
beautified with comely coportments and inscrip-  
tions of wise counsels and sentences; the windows  
enriched

## The Epistle Dedicatorie.

enriched with costly pictures of Prophets, Apostles,  
 and holy Fathers; and beyond all, the Chappell  
 for Gods immediate service, most beautifully fur-  
 nished with new Seats, Windows, Altar, Bibles,  
 and other sacred books costly covered, clasped, and  
 embossed with silver, and gilt with gold; with  
 Basen, Candlesticks, and other vessels all of bright  
 shining silver; and with stately Organs curiously  
 coloured, gilded, and enameled: no cost spared to  
 set forth the dignity of that house dedicated to  
 Gods worship: And the whole service of God  
 therein performed with all possible reverence and  
 devout behaviour of your own person, and all the  
 assembly; and with the organs of sweet ravishing  
 angelicall voices and faces of young men, lifting  
 up with heavenly raptures all the hearers and  
 beholders hearts to heaven, and enforcing me to  
 think and meditate, When such things are found  
 on earth in the Church Militant, Oh what uncon-  
 ceivable joyes shall we finde in heaven, in the  
 Church Triumphant! We have great cause to glo-  
 rify God for your Fatherhoods excellent care and  
 daff, in this and many \* other places, where (as  
 I heare) you have done the like: As also now  
 more lately, for our most excellent worthy and  
 Archbishopps Grace, who prosecuting his own and  
 some other Bishops preparations, hath now nota-  
 bly begun, and happily gone forwards with the  
 repairing of that most honourable ancient manu-  
 ment of Christendome, S. Pauls Church in Lon-  
 don, to the comfort of all good hearts, and glory

\* At Lin-  
 coln, West-  
 minster,  
 Cambridge,  
 Oxford, &c.  
 Where this  
 Bishop hath  
 built chap-  
 pels, libra-  
 ries, &c. or  
 garnished  
 and furnished  
 them with  
 excellent  
 books and  
 maintenance  
 for Scholars.

of

## The Epistle Dedicatorie.

of our nation; and also to work an unity of faith, and uniformity of practise in the service of God, and by all possible means to winne all adversaries therunto: which would be an incomparable joy to all true Christian hearts.

But to return again to Backden, to my observations there, and to my present purpose, I did also ordinarily speak among my friends, of the government of your great house, with all subjection and gravity, and of your hospitalitie (such as S. Paul prescribeth to Bishops) entertaining your numerous guests with countifull provision, and feasting them with variety and plenty of all good things, (but with exemplary sobriety in your own person) and with wise, learned and religious discourse, as wholesome for their souls, as your means for their bodies. But this I passe over now slightly, as beside my present purpose. for my purpose was onely to shew, how by the former sight of your house and Chappell, and the manner of Gods service therein, I well understood your Fatherhoods religious minde and intentions; but much better by your private words to my self afterwards, viz. That your desire was, to have the Consciences of all people (preachers and others) in your Diocese, rightly informed; and soundly convicted of the lawfulnessse, and perswaded to the practise of the established service of God, with the Rites and Ceremonies of our happily reformed Church; and that your self would leade them the way, and give them a fair example. This glad-

1. Tim. 3. 2.

\* S. August. epist. 86. in fine.

*Si consilio meo acquiescis, Episcopo tuo noli resistere; & quod facit ipse, sine ullo scrupulo sequere. In using Rites and Ceremonies.*

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

ded my heart more then the rest. So that, not long after, being appointed by your Lordship to preach at a Visitation at Leicester, I addressed my self to improve my best service to God and his Church, to our gracious Sovereigne Gods immediate deputy, to your Lordship the generall spirituell Father of these parts, and to our Connercy both ministers and people, for the better setting of their Consciences in these and other necessary points.

My sermon presently upon the hearing procured me thanks from many, even from the contrary-minded (formerly) and many desired copies or the publication, as did also some of your own officers, which I also promised. And shortly after, having made my copie ready (with some additions which time would not give me leave to utter; and with a brief Appendix at the end, fitter for young preachers to read at home, then for people to heare from the pulpit) I gave it to a friend to procure the printing: but my friend unfriendly kept it in his own or his friends hands so long, that till neare the end of this last yeare I could not get my copie again. At last having recovered it, and communicated it to some other learned judicious friends, they again importuned me for the publication, as a thing that undoubtedly would do much good to many unsettled souls. To which now I have condescended.

My good Lord, I beseech you (and all my Readers) to beare with my long preface. I thought

## The Epistle Dedicatorie.

*thought it necessary to let the world know the two occasions, one of my preaching, the other of the late publishing of this sermon. Now, such as it is, I send and dedicate it to your Fatherhood, whose it is by the first appointment and all the service it can do: and so is the Authour thereof*

Your Lordships in all humble service  
and observance to be commanded

ANTHONY CADB.



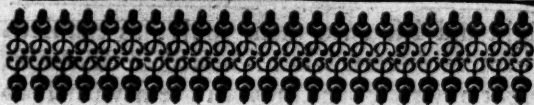


though it were necessary to let the world know the  
 two occasions, one of my preaching; the other  
 of the transcribing of this sermon. Now, I say  
 as it is, I find and declare it to your Ex-  
 cellency, which it is by the first appointment and  
 all the service it can do: and so is the Author  
 thereof.

Your Lordships in all humble service  
 and observance to be commanded

ANTHONY CAGE.





ROM. 2. 15.

*Which ( Gentiles ) shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conscience also bearing witnesse, and their thoughts the mean while ( or, between themselves ) accusing, or else excusing one another.*

**S**Aint Paul, to move all men to seek salvation by faith in Jesus Christ ( which he propounds chap. 1. vers. 16. and prosecutes chap. 3. vers. 21. ) shews in these first chapters, that all men are in themselves inexcusable sinners; The Jews sinning against the law written in their *Books*, the Gentiles against the law written in their *Hearts*.

This sentence convicts the Gentiles; but, by an argument *à minore ad majus*, much more confounds the Jews for sinning not onely against their Naturall law, but against Gods law supernaturally revealed.

It hath three generall parts.

First, *The very Gentiles have a Law-book in their hearts, written by the God of Nature.*

That is, God hath given such a naturall  
A light

Basil. tom. 1.  
in princ. Prov.  
boni. 12.

Origen. lib. 2.  
in Epist. ad  
Rom.

Chrysostom.  
in Psalm. 50.  
hom. 2.

light and life unto mens souls, as enableth them to discern what is honest or dishonest, right or wrong; and moveth them withall to do good actions, and avoid evil. This, in respect of the *Discerning light*, is by Basil called *Naturale judicatorium*, a naturall judgement: The Schools call it *Συνίστησις*, records of the law of Nature preserved in mans heart, for the rule of his life. In regard of the *Liveliness* of it, exciting and stirring up men to perform their duties; Origen calls it *Padagogus Anima sociatus*, A schoolmaster accompanying the soul, to teach man his duty and call for performance. Philosophers glance at it in their *Bonus genius*.

Secondly, *Conscience* (as it were *scientia cum alio*, sive *consensus cordis*, id est, *voluntatis cum scientia*) witnesseth with God, and with us, or against us, whether we have performed this law, or not: and to that end, it writes a second book, a Record, History, or Chronicle of all our counsels, courses, thoughts, words, and works: which S. Chrysostome calls *Codex*, in quo quotidiana peccata conscribuntur, A book wherein our daily finnes are written.

These books shall be opened at the last day: and the dead shall be judged of those things which are written in the books, according to their works, Revel. 20. 12.

Thirdly, Our discursive thoughts, comparing the Law-book (which shews what we should do) with

with our Chronicle (which shews what we have done) produce a third thing, a conclusion, either excusing and acquitting us (for doing according to the law) or accusing and condemning us (for doing against the law.) And thus Conscience hath a power to comfort us (against all accusations, distastes, and reproaches of men) when we are in the right; and to check us having run into erroneous opinions or unjust actions, though for our profit or pleasure, and with the worlds applause. So have we three parts of the text: the first *De iure*, the second *De facto*, the third *De iudicio*, of judgement.

The works of the Law written in the Gentiles hearts, concern God or our neighbour.

1. Part,

Concerning God, the Gentiles knew, 1. *Deum esse*: 2. *Qualis esse*: 3. *Adorandum esse*. 1. That there was a God: 2. That he had many transcendent properties: 3. That he was to be worshipped. This S. Paul sheweth Rom. i. 20. *The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and Godhead, so that they (the very Gentiles) are without excuse.*

As Seafaring men, lighting upon an unknown Island, when they finde hedge-rows, houses, and towns, know it is inhabited by Men, for these are not the works of Beasts: So the meere Gentiles viewing the Heavens, Sunne, Moon, Starres, the Land and Seas,

Woods, Rivers, and all kinde of Creatures, farre exceeding the wit of Man to devise them, or his power to make them, or any the least of them, conclude presently,

I.

1. These things had a Maker farre more excellent then Man; even that supreme power, which we call God.

II.

2. This Maker must in reason 1. be before the things made, as the cause before the effects: himself cause of all things, nothing cause of him; therefore *Eternall*. 2. He must also be *Almighty*, that could make all things of nothing, and sustain such a masse of creatures in such excellent manner, so many 1000 years. 3. He must be most *Wise*, that made them all in such order, variety, multiplicity, and distinction, every one perfect in his kinde; nothing defective or superfluous in any creature: So wisely, that without great wisdom, study, and observation, not any one of them can be understood. 4. He must be more *excellent* then his work, having in himself all the perfection and excellencies that can possibly be found in any or in all his works laid together: since from him they all proceed. 5. He is also most *Good* and *Bountifull*, that hath made all for mans use or benefit, and given man wit and power to manage them all, even creatures much stronger then himself; to conquer and passe over the boisterous seas upon his devised wooden tottering bridges; and to make use



use of all things in the world for his profit and pleasure. 6. He must needs be also most *Iust*, to reward those that are like himself, good and beneficiall to mankind; and to punish those that live disorderly; for the continuation of the world.

3. Their knowledge that this God must be worshiped, they shewed by their Sacrifices, Prayers, Temples, and Priests, whereof we reade plentifully in Poets and Historians of all Nations. Sacrifices they offered as chief rents in acknowledgement that of him they held whatsoever they possessed; and as to the authour of their life, safety, protection, preservation, and all other blessings; and as a kinde of thankfulness for benefits received, and prayers for continuance and increase of their happinesse. The divine scriptures mention the readinesse of the Lycaonians at Lystra, to sacrifice oxen to Paul and Barnabas for healing a creeple born lame, thinking them to be gods come from heaven in likenesse of men. And testimony of the Gentiles prayers we have in Jonas his shipmen upon the stormie seas, praying to their gods, and urging him to pray also. It seems also that all Nations were taught by the light of nature in prayer to bend the knee, to hold up their heads, to lift up their eyes, men to pray bare-headed, women covered, all with great reverence: as the histories of the Syrians,

A 3.

Chaldeans,

III.

See D. Ames  
Medulla the-  
ologiae, lib. 2.  
cap. 5.

Acts 14. 12,  
13.

Jonah 1. 5, 6.

1: Cor. 11. 4,  
5, 14, 15.

*Bellar. De  
effect. sacr.  
lib. 2. cap. 29.  
saith, Many  
ceremonies  
were in a sort  
instituted in  
nature, and  
therefore  
common to  
all heathen,  
and all sects:  
as, To lift up  
the eyes or  
hands to  
heaven, to  
bowe the  
knee, to  
knock the  
breast when  
we pray to  
God.*

*\* A. 17. 23.*

Chaldeans, Egyptians and other nations declare, and the Fathers observe. *Aug. de civ. Dei, Euseb. de prepar. Evang. Cicero de natura deor.*

No Nation in the world, but worshipped God after one fashion or other. Some (*Jehon*) had false gods: some (*monism*) had many gods: none were meerly (*idol*) without God. A God they knew there was in generall (though they erred in the particular, and somewhere erected altars \* *to the unknown God*;) and for their gods worship they ordained Temples, Priests and Ceremonies, not without great honour, cost, and magnificence: witnesse the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, the Temple of Apollo at Delphos, of Jupiter Amon, of Isis and Osiris in Egypt, with many other: And great Kings and Princes were their Priests; *Rex idem hominum Phœbique sacerdos.*

And though the vulgar had opinions of many gods, yet the wiser sort acknowledged but one; as the books *De Mundo* ascribed to Aristotle, and Philo, say. The same God in regard of severall offices, was called by severall names; as, for moderating the seas, called *Neptune*; for moderating the windes, *Eolus*, &c.

For duties towards their Neighbours, The Gentiles knew and practised the substance of the whole Second Table; at least,

so farre as concerned outward duties. Children honoured and obeyed their Parents, as Sichem did Hamor, not presuming to take a wife without his consent and employment. Murder every where most abhorred and grievously punished. Abimelech King of Gerar would not come neare Sarah (hating Adulterie) when he knew she was a mans wife. The Romane Lucretia prized her chastity above her life. Incest unheard of among the Gentiles. Wives subjection to their husbands commanded by Ahasuerus: And compulsion to drink more then a man list, forbidden by the same Gentile Monarch. Wrong, oppression, theft, defrauding any man of his right, forbidden by the generall rule, *Fac quod vis pati*; and, *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris*, Do nothing to another which thou wouldest not have done to thy self. Reusnerus (in Symbols) cites many heathen authours which deliver that rule. It was the common \* word of Alexander Severus, which he caused also to be proclaimed by his heraulds, whensoever he punished his subjects or souldiers which had wronged any man And for all other morall and civill righteousnessse, honesty, justice, temperance, sobriety, providing for the poore, helping the distressed, speaking the truth, observing leagues, contracts, and promises, avoiding perjury, punishing vice, honouring vertue and living orderly,

Gen. 34. 4.  
See D. Williams Church,  
lib. 3. cap. 3.  
pag. 347.  
Gen. 29. 4, 5.

1. Cor. 5. 1.

Esther 1.

Reusner. in  
Symbol. Imperat. lib. 1.  
Symb. 29.  
\* Which he  
learnt of his  
mother  
Mammæa,  
the scholar of  
that great  
Origen.  
Isaachs Ca-  
saul. Annot.  
in Fulium  
Capitolium.

the Gentiles had many excellent laws, wisely made and carefully observed. The generall observation of these in all nations, shewed the substance thereof to be naturall notions and principles written in their hearts: and the variety of their promulgations and penalties in severall nations argued deductions and consequents, drawn from those naturall notions, by the force of reason.

These naturall laws the most wise Creatour did write in the hearts of men, for these causes.

Causes and reasons thereof.

1. That there might be a perpetuall difference betwixt men and beasts. Had God given man a strong wit, understanding, policy, and not withall a Conscience, or naturall law to guide him; he had been of all Creatures the most dangerous.

2. To preserve humane society, and keep mens actions in some tolerable limits, by ordaining good laws, to bridle the disorderly, and protect the innocent in quiet possession of their rights, and for the common good: else (saith S. Augustine) *Quid sunt regna, nisi magna latrocinia?*

Aug. de civitate Dei, lib. 4. cap. 4. Rom. 1.

3. To be an ayd to man, better to search out the Creatour and to serve him. We may say of God as *Seneca* said of Nature, *Perditura fructum sui, si solitudini ostenderet*: He had lost the fruit of his work, had he shewed it onely to beasts which could not understand

understand it: so God had lost his glory, and man his felicity.

4 S. Paul addes, (Rom. i. 20.) To make the impious and unrighteous unexcusable, if they did not according to that law, which their own Conscience dictated unto them.

This was an inestimable benefit of God, to give every man such a worthy guide of his life, for morall, civill, and divine duties; in observing whereof he might live with much comfort, credit, profit, and earthly happinessse. *Use 1.*

And that these laws are undoubtedly just and equall, written by God himself (as the first Tables) and so legible, and in such plain characters, that the unlearnedest man may read them, though he know no letters of any other book; and in such a language as men of all nations and tongues may understand them: and that a man hath this book for his counsellour at home with him, he need not make long journeys to seek for a counsellour, or tedious waiting to attend his leisure, give costly fees to attain his counsell, which happily may prove doubtfull and untrusty: he hath this his bosome friend, free, faithfull, patient, as neare and as true to him as his own soul; with whom he may conferre again and again, at his leisure and pleasure, till he be fully resolved what he may lawfully do, or must avoid. And

B

This



Use 2.

*Paedagogus  
anime socius.  
Origenes.*

*Conscientia  
est speculum,  
frænum, cal-  
car, & flagel-  
lum.*

This is yet a greater benefit, that this Law-book is not a dead thing, like other books containing dead letters or precepts; but (like the divine word of God written in the heart, Hebr. 4. 12.) quick, lively, powerfull, operative, and piercing; as Gods Lieger Ambassador residing in our hearts, to shew us our duties and call upon us to do them: whereupon our Conscience is not onely called a *Book*, but a *Schoolmaster* also, to urge us to learn and perform our duties: *Mouet, & movet: movendo docet, docendo movet.* God knowing our ignorance, gives us this book to instruct us; knowing our headstrong inclination to evil, gives us this bridle to restrain us; and knowing our dullnesse to all good duties, gives us this spur to quicken us. And all this is our Conscience, which, if we do amisse, shall scourge us. But

Use 3.

As the benefit is great, of this Light to guide us, and of this Heat to quicken us (as of the Sunne in the great world:) So is the danger great, if we shut our eyes against the *Notions*, and our hearts against the *Motions* of our Conscience. For this is to be wilfully blinde, when we may see, or wilfully wicked when we do see our dutie, and do it not. This is plainly to rebell against God himself, to thrust his Deputie out of his throne and office: This is to provoke the Lord to give us up to our own hearts lusts, and

and to have no further care over us: as Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. And this is to draw upon us a most dangerous consequence, by degrees through the custome of sinne, to make our Conscience senselesse, seared, cauterized, or to choke and kill it, or in such sort to extinguish the light and life thereof, that the greatest sinnes will be practised without any check or remorse, to the intolerable hurt of the Church and Common-wealth, the shame of our lives, the damnation of our souls. Ephes. 4. 17. *The Gentiles walk in the vanity of their minde: 18. Having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19. Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousnesse, to work all uncleannesse with greedinesse.*

In regard of these benefits and dangers, it behoveth us to have a double care, *Use 4.*

First, to keep our Law-book pure and perfect, lest it misleade us to sinne, in stead of righteousness.

Secondly, to reade it and follow it diligently, lest it cease to be our guide, and become our accuser.

The first man Adam, before his fall, had it pure and perfect, abilitie to know his dutie fully, and to perform it throughly: But upon his fall, he lost his perfection, that is, the excellency

*Ad bonum nil impediēbat,  
ad malum nil impellebat.  
Magister lib.  
2. dist. 25.*

Gen. 5. 3.

cellencie of the image of God, both in *Knowledge* (Coloss. 3. 10.) and *Righteousnesse* and *true Holinesse* (Ephes. 4. 24.) And in this his depraved image he begat his children: In whom, though the life of Conscience was left, and light enough for performance of outward, morall, civill, and some religious duties, for preservation of humane societie and common life, yet no sufficient light to attain to the knowledge of the mysteries of saving religion: as the Trinitie of the Persons in the Unitie of the Godhead; the manner of our redemption by the incarnation and passion of the second person in Trinitie; the pardon of our sinnes, by his merit; our regeneration by his Spirit; our resurrection to life eternall; and other points. The naturall man conceiveth or perceiveth them not, he thinketh them foolishnesse, they are onely *spiritually discerned*, 1. Cor. 2. 14.

\* Rom. 1. 18.

\* Vers. 21.

\* 22.

\* 24.

As the naturall Conscience was shert in these things, so it was much corrupted in other things. The Gentiles <sup>a</sup>held the truth in unrighteousnesse, <sup>b</sup>became vain in their imaginations, their foolish heart was darkened, the <sup>c</sup>professours of wisdom became fools. They <sup>d</sup>dishonoured their own bodies with lusts and uncleannesse. In the foure last verses of the first chapter to the Romanes Saint Paul exhibites a long Catalogue of their foul overflowing sinnes, which they not onely practised,

practised, but took pleasure also in the practisers thereof.

For remedie of which evils, the Philosophers and wise men of the Heathen have written many books, labouring to revive, renew, and enforce the laws of nature, with reasonable deductions therefrom. Tully, in his books of Offices or Duties, layes this for his ground, *Naturam si sequamur ducem, nunquam aberrabimus*; If we follow the guidance of Nature, we shall never stray from our duties: and others tell us, *Conscientia est liber, ad quem emendandum omnes scripti sunt libri*; Conscience is a book, for amending whereof all books are written, so farre as concern mens actions. These men have taken great pains herein, husbanding and improving the light of naturall reason to the highest pitch, to their own great honour, and the worlds great good.

As also good Princes have, by the aid of these wise men, published and established many worthy laws, for their own honour and service, and for the common good and happiness of their subjects.

But our most gracious God, as he is infinitely above all in providence, wisdom, and goodness, so he hath declared his farre more excellent Will and Laws to his people, for his own honour and their happiness, inspiring some choice men in the Old and New Testament with divine Revelations, and testifying

Remedies by  
wise men,

And good  
Princes.

Divine and  
Supernaturall  
remedies, by  
the Scriptures

And Mini-  
sterie.

their Mission, Commission, and Doctrine to be immediately from him by divine miracles, as seals impossible to be counterfeited by any wit or power of men; appointing them to deliver by word to the present, and by writing to the future ages, his holy Laws, for the manner of his service, the guiding of their lives, and the attaining of felicitie. And these are the sacred books of the Scriptures. And he hath added yet another provident ordinance, The sacred Ministerie, men separated from other affairs, and consecrated to Gods publick service, and the peoples edification, directing their preaching to these two speciall ends; The one, to open the meaning of these holy Books, and teach the people to understand and imprint these Laws in their Conscience: The other, continually to work upon their affections, to excite and stirre them up often to reade them, and carefully to practise them.

And this is the excellencie of Christian Religion, above all Philosophie and humane laws or learning; which could never perfect the Conscience, nor purifie the heart, nor stirre up the affections, with such holy doctrines, rules, or principles, nor cause such a constant and universall practise of all kindes of vertue and goodnesse, nor procure such blessings temporall and eternall upon persons and nations, as these holy Books, and the continuall  
urgent



urgent preaching of them; doth perform.

But, be the remedies never so good; yet if they be not employed, applied, and continually renewed, Satan and Sinne are so busie to assail, so potent to prevail, and we so impotent to resist, so willing to yeeld, that corruptions will easily creep into our lives and Consciences. As we may observe

1. By the vehemency and disorderlinesse of our corrupt affections, lusts, or passions (whether love, hatred, covetousnesse, ambition, pride, fleshly lusts, or any other) blinding and carrying many away into sinfull courses, thinking in those passions evil to be good.

Causes corrupting the Conscience.

2. By Custome in sinne: For, what many do, is thought lawfull for all. Thus stealing of garments was lawfull with the Laecedemonians, many wives at once with the Turks, deadly fewd and stealing one side from another among our borderers; they thought it stood well with Religion. Sir Thomas More (Lord Chancellour of England in king Henry the 8 his time) writeth, The borderers would heare masse before they went to steal, and pray God so to blesse them that they might do harm and take none. Amongst us, of late, drunkennesse, pride, and such like vices, are thought lawfull, because usuall, and practised without check of Conscience. These blot, blurre, or fill up the deep graven letters

Consuetudo peccandi tollit sensum peccati.

of

of our Law-book with dirt, or bring us asleep in sinne, that we cannot easily spie or reade them.

3. By interlinings of false precepts or principles of false teachers: as, to this precept, *Love thy neighbour*, the Pharisees added, *And hate thine enemy*: which interlining Christ put out again, and restored the text to his old integrity, Matth. 5. 43. as he did other doctrines of men, Marth. 23. and 23.

4. By mistaking error for true religion: as our Saviour said to his Apostles, *They that kill you will think they do God service*. Saint Paul once thought that he was bound in Conscience to persecute Christians; he did it of zeal: and so the devout and honourable women, and chief men persecuted Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their coasts, moved by erroneous devotion.

By the like error, they that call themselves *Romane Catholicks* (deceived by Jesuiticall doctrine) persecute the true Catholicks that constantly hold all necessary saving doctrine grounded on the holy Scriptures, and universally received in the Primitive Church (as the Protestants do) and refuse onely the corrupt novell doctrines brought in by later Popes, and submission to their government: those they persecute, and seek by all means, even by treasons, insurrections, and murders of Princes, and massacres

of

John 16. 2.

Acts 26. 9.  
Phil. 3. 6.

Acts 23. 50.

Articles of  
1562. art. 6.

Art. 22.

Art. 37.

of people, utterly to root out, and think such courses not onely lawfull but meritorious, and that they are bound in conscience to practise them, especially upon their Popes excommunications. A conceit and doctrine strange and monstrous, never heard of in the Church of God, of a thousand yeares after Christian religions first planting, and untill Satan was \* loosed and permitted to deceive the nations. Then Pope Gregory the seventh began first to depose Princes, embroyling the Christian world with unchristian warres, kindling that fire which hath been kept burning by many succeeding Popes, and is still kept alive, blown continually with the breath of Jesuites, and other the Popes Incendiaries.

But the weapons of the first best Christians, even against persecuting tyrants, were patience and prayers, not treasons, murders, rebellions. We read in Scriptures of wicked Princes reprov'd by the Prophets, but neither deprived of their state, nor subjects animated to rebell, nor foreigners to invade. And if any Christian Prince were excommunicated, that made him not in worse state then a Heathen (with losse of his goods, government, or life) but \* *secundum* *Exhortatio*, sequestered from the blessing of the Church and Sacraments onely. The ancient Churches censures never proceeded further.

\* Revel. 10. 2, 3, 7, 8.

Greg. 7. formerly called *Hildebrand*, by many *Hilbrand*, as one that brought this wilde-fire from hell into the Church, for from heaven it could not come.

James 3. 13. a wisdom earthly, sensuall, devillish: edificat ad Gehennam. This Gregory was the first Pope that deposed any Princes, &c. as saith old *Friugensis*, & late *Ozuphrinus*. See Cades Justification of our Church, pag. 42, 43. & pag. 46, & seq. & lib. 2. pag. 64. & seq. \* Matt. 18. 17.

C

But,

For this point  
 read the B.  
 of Rochester  
*de potest. Pa-  
 pe, cap. 8.*  
 who citeth  
 many au-  
 thours.  
 B. Whites re-  
 ply to Fishers  
 answer, pag.  
 372.

But, howsoever that late unchristian do-  
 ctrine is still maintained in the books of a  
 great number of the Popes flatterers, that are  
 maintained by him in wealth and dignitie: yet  
 a great number also even of the learnedest  
 Divines of the Church of Rome hold the  
 contrary, and write books in confutation  
 thereof: confessing plainly, that the Pope (by  
 vertue of his office) hath not any power or  
 authoritie to depose Princes, or dispose of  
 their Crowns or lives, for any cause, crime,  
 or good whatsoever.

Whereupon most of our English Romane  
 Catholicks have (contrary to the Popes  
 briefs, Cardinall Bellarmines letters, and  
 other Romish Rabbines perswasions) taken  
 the oath of allegiance, and thereby insinuate  
 a reall confession (in this main point) that  
 the Pope, Cardinals, Conclave, Counsellors,  
 and greatest Doctors of that Church, may  
 erre, and leade them into damnable sinne, and  
 therein may and ought to be disobeyed. And  
 since the infallibility of that Pope and  
 Church hath been the greatest (if not the  
 onely) ground of holding them in many er-  
 rours, without searching into them: that  
 ground being now acknowledged to be un-  
 sound, there is great hope of their coming to  
 us in other points of difference (as they have  
 done in some already) if we be not averse  
 and hinder it by our dissensions at home. Oh  
 that

that we could recover that blessed unity of doctrine and good life of that one holy, primitive, ancient, Catholick Church!

Yet observe another malice and policy of Satan! if he cannot make us swallow these Camels, he will endeavour to make us strain at Gnats, and in hatred of the Papists large Conscience and grosse finnes, to make our Conscience too strait, and stick at things indifferent, as Caps, Surplesse, kneeling at Communions, Crossing the childe after he is baptized, and such like rites or ceremonies. Our people, by the blessing of God, hold the substance of saving religion entirely: we do not reare and wound Christs body, we onely strive about his garments. My desire is to take up this strife, and to keep that seamlesse coat unrent, because I see our adversaries (passing over their own great ones) make themselves sport at our petty dissensions. To stop their mouthes therefore, and satisfie our otherwise good Christian brethren, whose Consciences are afraid to receive these Ceremonies, give me leave to impart unto you my meditations touching this point: which I shall do the plainliest and briefliest, by answering a few questions.

*Quest. 1. Doth erring Conscience binde?*

Answer. It doth binde; so that he that doth against it, sinneth: Because whatsoever the Conscience dictates, it dictates *sub ratione*

Some Protestants too nice Conscience against Church-ceremonies.



*voluntati Dei*, as it informs us of Gods will, and so it hath in it self the force of the Divine will, and is in stead of God unto us, as Gods Lieger Ambassadour, to shew us our dutie, and call upon us to do it: therefore as long as we understand & acknowledge it to be so, it bindes us unto obedience as unto God. To do therefore that which thy Conscience saith is unlawfull (or while thou doubtst it is unlawfull) is to incurre damnation, Rom. 14. 23. *He that doubteth, is damned if he do it, because he doth it not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne.* Though it be clean in it self, yet to thee it is unclean, if thou thinkest it so, as Saint Paul saith there, vers. 24. He that doth against his Conscience, doth against the will of God, *quatenus non materialiter & verè, tamen formaliter & interpretatè*, though not in matter and truely, yet in form and by interpretation; because he doth that which he thinks is against Gods will. And this is reduced to the lack of the fear of God, to venture to do that which thou judgest God hath forbidden, and so hath written in thy Conscience, which must be Gods witnesse with thee, or against thee, and whereby thou must be judged.

Quest. 2. May a Christian Prince urge his subjects to observe such ceremonies in Gods service, as he knows to be lawfull, though some subjects think them unlawfull, or doubt of their lawfulness?

I

See Ames de  
conscien. lib. 1.  
cap. 3. n. 13.  
& cap. 4. n. 6.  
& Rob. San-  
dersons ser.  
upon Rom.  
3. 8.  
Cicero Offic.  
lib. 1. Bene  
præcipiunt,  
qui vetant  
quicquam ag-  
re, quod du-  
bitas æquum  
sit an ini-  
quum: æquitas  
lucet ipsa per  
se; dubitatio  
cogitationem  
significat in-  
juria.

I must answer this question, by first laying  
some grounds thereof in a few Propositions.

1. *It is absolutely necessarie that in performing the outward works of Religion, some outward rites and ceremonies be observed.* For, people cannot meet together, Gods service cannot be performed, Religion it self (whether true or false) cannot possibly subsist or continue, without times, places, orders, customes, words and actions prescribed and observed: as Saint Augustine urgeth, *Tom. 6. Contra Faustum, lib. 19. cap. 11. & seq.*

2. *The same ceremonies in particular are not prescribed in Scripture for all Churches.*

The substance of Religion must be the same in all places; ceremonies may varie: as S. Augustine and S. Ambrose joyntly teach. *Aug. epist. 118.*

For one manner of discipline may fit a free citie, another a large kingdome: one in peace, another in persecution: one under heathen kings, another under Christian: one in a Church newly planted, another in the settled State. Our Saviour instituted the Communion in a chamber, and after supper; we in our settled Church celebrate it in Temples, and in the morning: for Christs Apostles and the faithfull in their time celebrated it in private houses, and any time of day.

In the spring of the Church the *feasts* above were of good use, which S. Paul in short time

See Calv.  
Inst. lib. 4.  
cap. 10. Sect.  
14. & 30. D.  
Burges An-  
swer, pag. 81.  
& seq.

See D. Bur-  
ges Answ.  
pag. 8. & seq.  
& pag. 75. &  
seq.

Luke 24. 30,  
31, 33, 35.  
Act. 2. 46.  
1. Cor. 11.  
21, 22.  
1. Cor. 11. 19.

See my Justif.  
or Counter-  
charm, pag.  
209, 210,  
211.

1. Cor. 14. 40.

& vers. 26.

Calv. Inst. lib.

4. cap. 10. sect.

30.

D. Burges

pag. 75. &

seq.

found fit to be abrogated. Threefold dip-  
pings in Baptisme, standing (not kneeling) at  
prayers betwixt Easter and Whitsuntide, and  
many other things used by the Ancients, are  
now generally left off. So that

3. *Particular Churches are left to their own  
wisdom, to choose such ceremonies as may best  
fit them, observing S. Pauls generall Canons, Let  
all things be done decently, and in order: and, Let  
all things be done unto edifying.*

Since, beside the internall substance of re-  
ligion, some outward things must of necessitie  
be done in the publick assemblies of the  
Church (which we call ceremonies) how  
those must be done, and to what end, S. Paul  
here prescribeth: the manner, *orderly*, with-  
out confusion; *decently* or comely, for reve-  
rence, the end, for edification, to stirre up the  
assemblies mindes, the better to consider of  
the holy mysteries, and embrace the inward  
vertues. One of the notes which *Gregorius de  
Valentia* makes of the Church, is, That it is  
the most orderly societie in the world.

Many mislike our Church-rites, because no  
where commanded in Scripture. I answer, No  
more are those which they like. Is the Cap  
and Surplese no where commanded? no more  
is the nightcap, nor black cloke or gown. Is  
kneeling no where commanded at Communi-  
ons? no more is sitting, nor standing: and so  
of the rest. But where are any of these for-  
bidden

bidden in Scripture: If neither commanded nor forbidden, and yet some decent ornaments and gestures commanded in generall: then the particulars are left to the wisdom of the Church, to choose either this or that. Hereupon we finde that

*4 In severall particular Churches, the rites have been severall and different, and not censurable by other Churches.*

Because the severall Churches made choice of such orders as in their own judgement agreed best with S. Pauls canons of *Order, Decencie, and Edification* in their times and countreys. The Queen (an embleme of the Church) was not onely *glorious within*, (by holy and heavenly doctrine) but without also, standing in a *vesture of gold*, wrought about with *divers colours*, that is, divers comely orders and ceremonies, as S. Augustine interprets them, *Epist. 88.* towards the end.

Psal, 45.

Now the judgement of some particulars, may not prejudice or censure others, because the opinions and reasons of men are often different upon one and the same point, and each one abounds in his own sense: as, for the gesture in receiving the holy Communion, some condemne kneeling, as Popish and superstitious: others condemne standing, as Jewish and irreligious: others condemne sitting, as an irreverent and unmannerly gesture to receive so heavenly a blessing:

But

Aug. epist. 86.  
in fine, & e-  
pist. 118. pau-  
lo post inisi-  
um.

But the determination of this point I will shew you in the words of two ancient grave learned Fathers, Saint Augustine, and Saint Ambrose. Saint Augustine in his 86 epistle, and again in the 118 epistle, writes, how his mother Monica being with him at Millain, was much troubled in minde because there they fasted not on saturdayes, as in her countrey they did; and that, to satisfie her the better, he asked Saint Ambrose his advice: who answered, I can give you no better advice, then to do as I do: When I am at Rome, I fast on saturdayes; when here at home, I fast not: *Sic etiam tu, ad quam forte Ecclesiam veneris, ejus morem serva, si cuiquam non vis esse scandala, nec quenquam tibi: Do you so also, to what Church soever you come, observe the custome thereof, if you will not offend any, nor have any offend you.* This satisfied his mother: and himself often repeating it in his books counted it as an Oracle come from heaven. Here we see even in cities of the same countrey of Italy, there were severall customes and ceremonies: and Millain was no more bound to the orders of Rome, then Rome to those of Millain: which I wish all good men to consider well, and to rest satisfied in these things with the judgement of these two great lights of the Church, Ambrose and Augustine; and all good women, with Monica, not to be of those mens mindes, *Qui, nisi quod ipsi faciunt,*

Aug. ibid.



ciunt; nihil rectum existimant, that think nothing right but what themselves do. Saint Augustine saith there determinately, *Totum hoc genus rerum liberis habet observationes: Nec disciplina ulla est in his melior gravi prudentisque Christiano, quam ut comodo agat, quo agere viderit Ecclesiam, ad quamcunque sorte devenit*: The observation of all the sorts of these things is free, and at liberty: neither can there be any better rule for a grave and wise Christian, then to do as he seeth that Church do, to which he chanceth to come. And he concludes his 86. epistle thus, *Si consilio meo libenter acquiescis, Episcopo tuo in hac re noli resistere, & quod facis ipse, sine ullo scrupulo vel disceptatione sectare*: If you be willing to rest upon my counsel, do not resist your Bishop in this matter; but what he doth, follow you, without scruple or urging.

5. In Nationall Churches, or whole Christian Kingdomes, who shall be judge to set down and impose what is decent, orderly, and fittest for edification? Shall private men? That may not be; for their opinions are various: and then in severall congregations we should have severall ceremonies and fashions, one crossing and condemning another, with much disquietnesse and offence, *Quot capita, tot schismata* (saith Saint Hierom) endlesse distraction and confusion.

If no private men, then we must conclude,

D

The

Epist. 118.  
Greg. Epist.  
lib. 1. cap. 41.  
In una fide  
nihil officit  
sanctæ Eccle-  
siæ consuetu-  
do diversa.

Reads Socra-  
tes eccl. hist.  
lib. 5. cap. 22.  
& Sozomen.  
lib. 7. cap. 19.

*The King* (or chief governour of the whole nationall Church) *must be the supreme judge,* and none other, and that for two reasons.

1. He onely hath power to gather together the most godly, wise, and learned men in the whole kingdome, and (if need be) to have the advice and judgement of the best learned in other nations, by whose grave counsels he may with great maturitie of judgement set down orders fittest for the whole nationall Church.

2. He onely hath power to impose them upon all congregations within his dominions, for unitie and uniformitie, and to inflict punishment upon the offenders: for, *Lex sine coactione nulla est*, To make a law, and not compell men to keep it, (and so let every man still do what he list) is to no purpose.

### Conclusion

Therefore the conclusive answer to this second question is, *A Christian Prince may, yea and ought to impose upon his subjects such ceremonies in Gods publick service, as he knows to be lawfull and convenient for order, decency, and edification, and compell men to observe them, for the preservation of unitie, uniformitie and peace of the Church in his dominions.* And

6. *They that resist such Magistrates in such things, do grievously sinne against God. They resist the ordinance of God* (saith S. Paul, Rom. 13. 2.) *and procure to themselves damnation: And* (vers. 5.) *Ye must needs be subject, not onely*

only for <sup>a</sup> wrath, but also for <sup>b</sup> Conscience sake.

<sup>a</sup> Necessitate externā.

<sup>b</sup> Necessitate internā.

**Quest. 3.** What is then to be done, when thy Prince (Gods deputy, and in Gods stead) commands thee, and thy Conscience (Gods deputy also, and in Gods stead) forbids thee the same? since in obeying thy Prince, thou sinnest against thy Conscience; in obeying thy Conscience, thou sinnest against thy Prince: in both against God, because they both have their authoritie from God to command thee, and to binde thee under pain of damnation, not to offend.

The answer then to this third question is, *The Conscience must be reformed.* For otherwise, here is a labyrinth so inclosing the poore soul, that as long as the Conscience continueth in this error, it is impossible to come out without sinne. Therefore I wish that all good means may be used to avoid sinne and damnation.

On the Magistrates part, I wish (with many other good men) these cautions to be observed: and I finde they have been well observed.

1. That great care be taken for amending the Law-book of Conscience; that is, for better information of the erring, and resolution of the doubting Conscience. As Ezra gathered all the people together (Nehem. 8, 1, 2.) read the law unto them, and he with

others

Mr. Slater in Rom. 2.

Mr. Mafons serm. at Norwich, &c.

pag. 70.

2. Chron. 17.  
7, 8, 9. and  
Chap. 19. 4.  
*Vide Cande-  
ni Annales  
Elisabethæ,  
pag. 26. edit.  
Lugd. Batav.  
anno 1625.*

others made the people to understand it (vers. 7, 8.) and in the chapters following they all made a covenant of obedience to the Lord. This order also took Jehoshaphat, 2. Chron. 17. and 19. So did the Protestants in reforming the abuses crept into the Church. Our Queen Elizabeth of blessed memory, first caused the people to be taught and rightly informed throughout the land, and after that established the reformation.

2. That the scrupulous be not too hardly dealt withall upon any sudden proceedings: for they sinne not willingly, but of a pious humilitie and fearfulnessse to offend God, and therefore are much to be pitied, and better instructed.

3. That compulsion or punishment be not hastened so long as there appeares a desire and godly endeavour to be better informed. But

4. These things being first well performed, first sufficient information offered, secondly a tender usage of the parties, and thirdly a convenient time given to settle the Conscience; men not yeelding may be accounted refractarie and obstinate, rather then tender-conscienced: they seem not now to be *errantes* but *turbones*, contumacious troublers and

*Aquin. in  
Ep. ad Rom.  
cap. 14. vers. 2.  
To avoid  
scandall of*

little ones, a man must deferre the use of things lawfull, till a reason may be rendered to remove the scandall: but if the scandall still remain after the reason rendered, it seems not to proceed from ignorance or infirmity, but of malice, and so belongs to the scandall of Pharisees. See *Mafens serm. pag. 56. & Zanchius de redempt. cap. 17. fol. 493.*

disquieters of the peace, unitie, uniformitie, and happinesse of the Church, which Christian Kings are bound in Conscience to preserve: and as they have in love used all good means to win the humble, so now in justice they must punish the disorderly, to preserve unitie. I dare not say (as S. Augustine said of unitie in sound doctrine, *Pereat unus potius quam unitas*: but, in our discipline, I may boldly say with our laws, *Mereat unus potius quam unitas*. For, continuance in error through wilfull neglect of the means of better information, is censurable of obstinacy, and disobedience both to God and the Prince.

On the peoples part, I wish these things to be seriously considered.

First, since it hath pleased Almighty God to give us wise, religious, and gracious Princes, nursing Fathers and Mothers to his Church, who have already banished the intolerable tyrannie, corruptions and abuses crept into the Church, restored us to free libertie of Conscience, and peace of pure religion, and by good laws, officers, and other provident and potent means protected and preserved it and us: We the subjects should take this for a benefit inestimable, not abuse it to the liberty of new opinions, or to the loosenesse and dissolution of publick government, but to be most thankfull to our

Mr. Slater in  
Rom. 2.



See B. Jewels  
Apologie,  
edit. London.  
1591. pag.  
170.

Princes for it, give them all possible content, and yeeld our selves more willing and ready to all civill burdens.

Secondly, that these constitutions were first and chiefly directed to those true necessary ends prescribed by S. Paul, *Order, Decencie, and Edification*: and secondarily (with respect to former ages, and the present state of neighbour nations) to the greatest grace and honour of our Church, in that (beside the inward substance of doctrine) they make the very outward face of our Church as like as may be to the most ancient and purest Churches, which yeelded so many thousand Martyrs for the testimony of the truth in their times, and lately also in Queen Maries time a number more, living and dying in the liking or practise of them. And thirdly they tend to the stopping of the mouthes of our clamorous adversaries, which charge us with continuall newfanglednesse, and utter milike of the fashions of the most ancient glorious Primitive Church.

Thirdly, that our ceremonies are confessed by the most excellent Divines of foreign reformed Churches to be no way unlawfull or forbidden by the word of God, either in direct words, or by necessary consequences. Neither are they imposed as things absolutely necessary to salvation, or as parts of Gods proper worship, but as things meerly

in

This is shew-  
ed plentifully  
in the Ap-  
pendix here-  
unto an-  
nexed.

in their own nature indifferent: Nor as things in themselves binding the Conscience, further then as they are commanded by the Magistrate: Neither commanded by the Magistrate as things perpetually necessary, but to be altered or abrogated by the wisdom of the governours, as may best fit their times and nations. And they have been so ordinarily used without scruple of Conscience, by the most godly both ancient and later Martyrs, who never suspected any Heathenisme, Judaisme, Papisme, or Superstition to be nourished by them.

Lastly, let it not be passed over without due thankfulnessse to God, and great joy to our hearts, that our Church continuing in the use of these ceremonies hath been continually blessed with such constant peace, prosperitie, happinesse, and honour, as no other reformed Churches have ever yet attained unto. Therefore, let not us be led with a spirit of contradiction, or singularitie, but think humbly of our selves, reverently of our rulers, and of the godly learned, and have alwayes a desire to be rightly informed, and meeknesse of minde to yeeld to the truth, when it is once made evident, and having alwayes one eye fixed upon the nature of things indifferent (and therefore lawfull) and the other upon the duty of a subject to his soveraigne (and therefore necessary.)

Generally,

Generally, (to conclude this whole part) here is 1. A necessity of much hearing and reading of the word of God, for the right information of our Conscience, and storing our naturall Law-book with supernaturall principles and directions both for faith and life: and consequently, here is

2. A necessity of learned, diligent, and conscionable preachers, not onely to imprint true rules in the books of mens Consciences, but also to stirre and rouze them up to look into and carefully to reade their book, against the spirituall lethargie, sleepinesse, dulnesse, and lothnesse which either custome of sinne, love of the world, fashions of men, or policy of the Devil, brings upon them. And herein we are greatly to magnifie our gracious God, who hath furnished our Church with abundance of able and diligent preachers, young and old. In the youngest sort, our young Samuels, young Daniels, young Timothies, I do much reverence Gods gifts and graces: but withall I heartily desire them advisedly to reade, and diligently to practise the profitable directions of our Gracious Princes, the Defenders of our faith, our late learned and judicious King JAMES, and the inheritour of his fathers piety as well as of his kingdomes, our present King CHARLES: who finding unexpected increase of Papisme, Anabaptisme, and other Sects, in this cleare light of the Gospel,

See K. James his letters to the Archb. and the Archb. letters to other Bishops anno 1622: and K. Charles his proclamation and letters to the Archb. in his two first years: the copies may be had in every Registers office, by order.

Gospel, and in this plenty of Preaching, thought good (by their Proclamations and letters to our Bishops) to give to all preachers, and specially to the younger sort, directions (yet no other in substance, then S. Paul gave to young Timothy) how to behave themselves more profitably in their teaching, then formerly some of them had done. The chiefest directions were these. 1. To forbear all deep, needlesse and endlesse questions, too hard for the peoples capacitie, and tending rather to strife then edification, as Saint Paul doth, 1. Tim. 1. 4. and 6. 4, 5, 20. and 2. Tim. 2. 16, 23. 2. To continue in the doctrine already established (and for the essence, substance, effect, or naturall inference, comprehended in the Articles of the year 1562, the Homilies, and the two Catechismes, the lesser and the greater) by which doctrine, superstition, idolatry, and heresie was driven out, and this blessed reformation happily settled in our Church: and thus Saint Paul did also, 1. Tim. 1. 3. 2. Tim. 1. 13. and 3. 14. like that of the Galat. 1. 6, 7, 8, 9. 3. To use diligent Catechizing in the after-noon, and to confine all their teaching to those two speciall heads of true faith and good life, as S. Paul doth, 2. Tim. 1. 13. 1. Tim. 4. 5, and 2. Tim. 2. 22, 24, 25.

These directions of our Princes, and Canons of Saint Paul (commended unto us both

E

by

by Regall and Apostolicall authoritie) I wish may be thoroughly observed by us all: aiming above all things at the sound and profitable informing and exciting of our peoples Consciences in all saving truth and Christian duties, as the chief <sup>a</sup> end of all our preaching, whereby we shall by Gods blessing make the Church <sup>b</sup> firm in faith, <sup>c</sup> pure in heart, <sup>d</sup> peaceable in life, and <sup>e</sup> precious in the eyes of God and men.

Thirdly, here is a necessity also that the hearers be well catechized in the grounds of Religion, gathered out of plain places of the Scriptures, and write in their Conscience all the fundamentall points and necessary doctrines of Religion, by hearing, reading, observing, and learn to draw out of them good uses for practise and guide of their lives; as a good <sup>f</sup> Scribe well instructed to the kingdome of heaven, or a good householder, that for all uses can bring out of his treasury things new and old: that they may be able, not onely to instruct their families at home (their <sup>g</sup> wives, their <sup>h</sup> children, and <sup>i</sup> servants) but also to <sup>k</sup> try the spirits of teachers whether they be of God; not to <sup>l</sup> despise prophesyings (or preaching) but to *prove all things, and hold fast that which is good*, (for that precept was not given onely to Pastours and Doctours, but to the whole Church of the Thessalonians, 1. Thess. 1. 1.) as the <sup>m</sup> Bereans tryed the doctrine

<sup>a</sup> 1. Tim. 1. 5,

6, 19. and 3. 9.

Heb. 10. 22.

and 13. 18.

<sup>b</sup> Eph. 4. 14.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. 5. 8.

Tit. 1. 15.

<sup>d</sup> 2. Tim. 2. 22.

Rom. 13. 18.

Matt. 5. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Acts 23. 1.

and 24. 16.

2. Cor. 1. 12.

<sup>f</sup> Matt. 13. 52.

5 1. Cor. 14.

34, 35.

<sup>g</sup> Ephe. 6. 4.

<sup>h</sup> as Abraham

did, Gen. 18.

19. and Jo-

shuah, Josh.

24. 15. and

David, Psal.

101. 2, 6, 7.

<sup>i</sup> 1. Joh. 4. 1.

2. Tim. 3. 5, 6.

Matt. 23. 15.

<sup>k</sup> 1. Thess. 5.

20, 21.

<sup>m</sup> Acts 17. 11.



Crine of Paul and Silas; They received the word with allreadinesse of minde, but they searched the Scriptures dayly, whether these things were so: As our Saviour biddeth, <sup>a</sup> Search the Scriptures, <sup>b</sup> Trie the spirits, <sup>c</sup> Beware of false prophets, and of the <sup>d</sup> leaven of the Pharisees and Sadduces.

<sup>a</sup> John 5. 39.  
<sup>b</sup> Mart. 7. 15.  
<sup>c</sup> Mart. 16. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> 12.

Fourthly, a necessitie also of some ancient learned men, and long students, such as have read the ancient Fathers, and Ecclesiasticall histories, to shew the rites and ceremonies (beside the doctrine) of the ancient Primitive Church in the best and purest times. You may heare with much profit and comfort all Preachers, even the youngest in their freshest wits, memory, and strength, for points of salvation, taught in the holy Scriptures, within their reading, and compasse of studie: but for rites and ceremonies trust onely the graver and well-read Divines, which have searched Antiquity; that our Church-rites may come as neare the purest and ancientest Church as may be, without any affectation of noveltie.

Hitherto I have spoken of the first part of my text, The Law-book of Conscience, with the properties, causes, uses, manifold depravations, and necessary reparations thereof. Now I proceed to the second part, *The Chronicle of Conscience.*

## II. PART.

*Their Conscience also bearing witnesse,*

As formerly witnesse to the truth and Acquity of the Law-book, and thereby exciting us to the work thereof: so now a witnesse to God and to our hearts whether we perform the Law or not.

## Doctrinē.

For, *Conscience preserves a memoriall of all a mans actions.*

It is not a dead but a living book annexed to the soul; and as it hath in one part the rules to guide our life, so it writes in another part the course of our life, and is (as I said before) Gods Lieger Ambassadour, both to put man in minde of his duty, and also to observe what he doth; and (whether a man look on his Law-book or not, whether he minde his duty or not) Conscience sits silent and close in a corner of his heart (like a Register in his office) continually noting and writing the mans courses, plots, devices, with all their materiall circumstances, how they swerve or agree with the instructions set down in the Law-book, without any partiality, as Gods true and faithfull witnesse; and this is Saint Chrysostomes *Codex, in quo quotidiana peccata conscribuntur*, A book wherein our dayly sinnes are written.

Chrysostom.  
on Psal. 50.  
homil. 2.

The Conscience is an individuall (or unseparable) companion of a mans soul: it walks (though invisibly) in the same gardens with him,

him, sits at the same table, lies in the same bed. Many men are unmarried, but none lives single: they may walk, speak, and think without other companions, but never without their Conscience, that is still partaker of all their counsels: that not onely heares and sees, but writes down and records (as in a Chronicle) all things done, said or thought.

By this Chronicle of our lives, we may finde written (whether we minded it or no, while it was in writing) undeniable records testifying whether we did this or that, or whether we did it not: as in sinne, David willingly forgot, hid, and covered his grievous sinnes, thinking they should never come to light: but after nine moneths Nathan opened his Conscience, and compelled him to confesse it. So it was with Judas. So the Conscience of Josephs brethren was not minded by them, till their affliction in Egypt made them look into it, and then they saw their crueltie to their brother written in large letters, and convicting them of sinne. So of our innocency; Davids Conscience shewed him he had not conspired against Saul. Samuel could boldly say, *Whose ox have I taken? or whose asse have I taken? whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe?* Moses could say of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their companies, *I have not taken an asse*

2. Sam. 12.  
13.

Matt. 27. 3, 4.

Gen. 42. 21,  
22.

1. Sam. 24. 11.

1. Sam. 12. 3.

Num. 16. 15.

Use 1.

from them, neither have I hurt any of them.

1. Sam. 25. 37.

Let no man sinne then, in hope to be hid for lack of witnesses. He may blinde the world, but neither God nor his own Conscience: he carries (*mille testes*) a thousand witnesses in his own bosome, or one as strong as a thousand, which will testifie his own secrettest sinnes to his own sorrow and shame, when God cites it. While traitours think their practises remain covered and unknown, they are somewhat hearty to denie: but when their own letters or other accusers privy to their facts are produced against them into the open light, then their hearts (like Nabals) die within them. Or as a murderer having left two men for dead, and being afterward apprehended for suspicion, and stoutly denying all, now when he sees one of them brought in alive, able to see him and to speak, then he cries out, Alas! art thou alive? then I am undone: so a wicked man would deny all, but when God brings forth his living Conscience to accuse him, then he is stricken dumbe, and findes he is undone. I reade of a Philosopher, that hearing his creditour was dead, kept the money (which he had borrowed without witnesses) a night or two: but after some struggling with his Conscience, he carried it to his Executour, saying, *Mihi vivit, qui aliis mortuus est*, He is alive to me, though he be dead to others. Oh offend not thy Conscience,

ence, which alwayes watcheth thee, and writes up thine own sinne and shame against thee. *Turpe quid ausurus te sine teste time.*

O Ahab! how cunningly and closely contrivest and conveyest thou thy mischievous practises against a poore innocent! Will not a palace, a kingdome content thee, where thou maist live in love, in honour, in wealth, and pleasure; but thou must have Naboths vineyard too? and to get it, rush headlong into such damnable courses, as to counterfeite a Religious fast, making a shew of Devotion a cloke to cover an odious sinne, (which is the height of impietie) and to suborn false witnesses to accuse an innocent; corrupt the Judges, under colour of law, to condemn him; to take away his livelyhood, and withall his good name, and the pitie and compassion of his neighbours and beholders (which is the height of Tyrannie;) yea worse, (if any thing can be worse) then stoning him to death and depriving himself and his children of inheritance and life? And doth not thy Conscience check thee for all this? Surely Conscience had written it up: but he minded it not for joy of his fine contrived excheat, till coming from taking possession he met the Prophet Elias, to whom he said, *Hast thou found me, O mine enemye?* Why his enemye? Oh his Conscience now accused him of his wickednesse, which had made both God and good men his

1. Kings 21.

1. Kings 21.  
20.



his enemies: and now at last he found (in stead of magnifying his house, and establishing his posteritie) what an evil covetousnesse he had covered to his own house, what a vengeance he brought upon himself and his posteritie.

Oh Absalom! how well mightest thou flourish, if the favour of a King, the love of a kingdome, the beauty of thy person, wealth, honour, and pleasure, with any moderation, would content thee! But thou art sick of the Father, and ambition carries thee headlong into treasonable courses and untimely death. Thou colourest thy foul practises with fair pretences, hiding thy intents from the abused people, while thine own end is hid from thy self. God sees all, thy Conscience writes all, while thou needlessly and heedlessly runnest a full carriere to thine own destruction.

And thou David, from the shepherds staffe raised to the Kings sceptre, and now settled in thy kingdome in great wealth, peace, honour, and prosperitie; wilt thou now forget thy self so farre, that thine own hundred sheep will not satisfie thee, but thou must take thy neighbours onely ew that lies in his bosome? wilt thou commit so foul an act: and yet a fouler, to murder the right innocent owner? and to do it the closelier, wilt thou betray the Lords guiltlesse army into the enemies hand, and cause his name to be blasphemed among the heathen?

See 2. Sam.  
12. and the  
chapters fol-  
lowing.

then? and wilt thou hereby draw plagues upon thee and thine, and cut off thy prosperitie when thou needest not? and doth thy Conscience all this while sleep, and will never awake? No, no; thy Conscience is writing all the while a chronicle of all thy doings: and after nine moneths, when the childe is born, Nathan will open thy book, and make thee reade thine own sinne, which will cost thee many teares, and much heart-grief, and many afflictions from thine own subjects, from thine own children, all thy life long after.

For our innocencie and good works, we need not hunt for eye-witnesses to cleare and to cheere us: Conscience alone giveth sufficient comfortable testimony. A cleare Conscience is a brazen wall, to keep off all the darts of sinne or shame which ill tongues can throw against us. He that is of sound life, and free from ill-doing, hath his heaven within him, and may say with S. Paul (2. Cor. 1. 12.) *Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you wards. In midst of slanders and uncharitable surmises of malicious men, comfort thy self with the witnesse of thy sinceritie and innocencie, as S. Paul did there: and Acts 23. 1. Men and brethren, I have lived in all good Conscience*

Use 2.

*Hic morus a-  
beneus esto,  
Nil conscire  
sibi, nulla pal-  
lescere culpa,  
Horat.*

*Integer vita,  
scelerisq; pu-  
rus, non eget  
Mauri jacu-  
lis; nec arcu,  
&c. Idem.*

ence before God unto this day. And Acts 24.  
16. Herein I do exercise my self, to have alwayes  
a Conscience void of offences towards God and to-  
wards men: and neare his death (2. Tim. 4.  
6.) Now (said he) I am ready to be offered,  
and the time of my departure is at hand: I have  
fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I  
have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up  
for me the crown of righteousness, &c.

Use 3.

Our Conscience also will witness, whe-  
ther in doing good works we serve God, or  
our selves: that is, whether we do the works  
of our vocation with true sinceritie and sim-  
plicitie of heart, and observing all due cir-  
cumstances, referring all to the true ends,  
Gods glory chiefly, and secondly our own  
salvation, comfort and profit, and the good  
of others, without hurt or wrong to any:  
which if we do, our Conscience will assure  
us, we are guided by Gods Spirit, are in  
Gods favour, have received the earnest of  
our inheritance, the Spirit of adoption, al-  
though we feel still imperfections in our  
selves, as S. Paul did, Rom. 7. 21, &c. or  
whether we do our good works in hypo-  
cristie, and for our own by-ends, which may  
be profitable to others, but neither please  
God nor our own Conscience soundly as they  
ought to do.

I.

Thus (to apply it onely to our present  
meeting) Preachers may finde it written in  
their

2. Cor. 1. 5.  
Rom. 8. 14.  
1. 5. 16.  
Eph. 1. 13, 14.  
2. Cor. 1. 22.

their Conscience, whether their preaching hath been directed to Gods true service, for his glory, and the right information and salvation of his people; or whether to their own praise, to shew their learning, eloquence, and wit, or to please and humour their patrons, friends, and people for maintenance and preferment. I wish we all could say with St. Paul (Acts 20.26.) *I take you all so record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, and have taught you all the counsell of Gods* and Acts 24.16. and 2. Cor. 1.15.

Our Visitours and their inferiour officers may finde written in their Consciences, whether they make such a meeting as this *Morum* or *Nummorum visitatio*, visiting to do good to the Church or to themselves. Sure I am, these offices and meetings were ordained for good; and the execution thereof doth much good in our Church, to see that ministers do their duties, preach true and profitable doctrine, and that diligently, live honest and unoffensive lives, and be examples of all goodnesse to their flocks; to see whether Church-buildings, furniture, books, vestments, and especially people be in good order. They that do all these good offices, deserve good recompense for their pains and care; their persons and offices are venerable, honourable, and exceeding profitable to the Church.

See Gabr. Powells consideration of the ministers supplication to the Parliament: 1606, pag. 11, 12.

2

D. Boys in a visitation Sermon.

3 But the good performance of the best Visitours may be much hindered by corrupt or negligent under-officers, Church-wardens, Side-men, Apparitours, which are the eyes of the Visitours. I wish them to reade seriously in their Conscience; whether they serve God or Mammon; or God for Mammon; whether they betray not the trust committed to them, making the Visitours look through false glasses, or spectacles, to see *Omnia bene in billis*, when there is rather *Omnia male in villis*, and their feeling is better then their seeing; and so no good reformation follows, because no good information went before. I can go no further but onely advise men to look to their Consciences, lest they become partiall causes of the continuance of any evil in the Church, and thereby derive much of the guilt and punishment upon themselves: whereas by conscionable execution of their office and trust, they may procure much good to the Church, settle true peace in their Conscience, and derive upon themselves many blessings from God, with love and praise from men.

But I must hasten to the third part of my Text, and hasten through it.

III. PART.

D. Boys,  
ibid.



## III. PART.

*Their thoughts accusing, or excusing.*

**T**Heir discurfive thoughts, by comparing these two books together (the one containing *Facts*, the other *Regulam factorum*) the Law of God, and the Chronicle of our lives, either accuse and condemne for their disagreement, or excuse and acquit for their agreement. The first book makes the *Proposition* or *Major* of a *Practicall Syllogisme*, Thus thou must do. The second book makes the *Assumption* or *Minor*, Thus thou hast done. The Conscience, with the discoursing thoughts, out of those *Premises* draws the *Conclusion*, *Ergo* thou hast done evil, or well; against the law, or according to it; and therefore art to be accused and condemned, or therefore art to be excused and acquitted. This is the *Naturale iudicatorium* of Damascen; the Naturall judgement-seat of the God of nature placed in mans heart.

The Law saith, He that liveth in damnable sinne, shall die: Thy Chronicle saith, Thou livest in damnable sinne, and names it: Thy thoughts conclude, *Ergo* thou shalt die. Again,

The Law (fulfilled by the Gospel, Matth. 5.17. Rom.3.31.) saith, He that repents and beleeves in Christ, shall not die but live: Thy Chronicle saith, Thou repentest and beleevest,

for thou bringest forth fruits of faith and repentance, &c. Thy thoughts conclude and assure thee, *Ergo* thou shalt not die but live.

The daily meditation and discoursing of these things is very acceptable to God, and profitable to us: for it works in us a right judgement of Gods wayes, Ezek. 18. 25. with due thankfulnesse, and heedfulnes to his laws; and in our lives, humilitie, repentance, and carefulnesse, and to all others equitie, and lenitie, Tit. 3. 2, 3. Gal. 6. 1, 2.

Hinderances  
of the Con-  
sciences  
working.

But oftentimes the Conscience seemeth to be asleep, and doth not compare these books together; it stirres not, troubles not the sinner: partly because the vehemencie of his desires to accomplish his projects of covetousnesse, ambition, or lusts of the flesh, &c. carries him on with such earnestnesse, that he minding not his Conscience: and partly, because the devil politickly presents him with such objects and projects, as may withdraw his minde, feed his fancie, and occupie his thoughts otherwise, with meditating wholly upon the profit, pleasure, satisfaction and contentment that sinne promiseth him; and upon devising, plotting, contriving, and practising the means how to bring his purpose to passe, and how to couch all close together, to keep secret, cover, and colour all to deceive the eyes of the world: that he findes no time to think on God, his benefits, nor his own dutie and danger. And part-

partly, because after the accomplishing of his sinne, he is indeed loth to look into his Conscience, lest it trouble him, and make him to forsake & repent his sinne, which he so dearly loveth, or drive him into sorrow and melancholy. So that if he feel any little prick of Conscience, he labours to smother and choak it, or withdraw his thoughts from it, by seeking pleasant company, gaming, sporting, minstrellie, feasting, drinking, or one device or other. But (alas!) very lamentable and damnable is those mens estate, that thus turn the deaf care to the suggestions of God or their Conscience, that withhold the truth in unrighteousnesse, and by violence hinder the working thereof in their hearts: that suffer the devil so farre to delude them, as to force their hearts to think the checks of Conscience to be nothing but fits of melancholy, and qualmes of folly, and labour to put them away by idle vanities or sinfull courses, and so cozen themselves of a great benefit of God, an especial means of their salvation: for this breeds impenitencie in most grievous finnes, Isa. 44. 18. yea witlesse presumption that all is well with them, Rev. 3. 17. And thus a number (by the policie of Satan, the strong man that keeps the house in peace where he is master, Luk. 11. 21.) live and die stupid and senselesse either of their present sinne, or following vengeance. They put away all thought of the evil day, glut them-

*Facti sunt  
fugitivi à  
cordibus suis.*

Rom. 1. 18.

The mischief  
of neglecting  
the motions  
of Conscience.

themselves with all fulnesse of wealth and pleasure, Amos 6. 3, 4, 5, 6. *There are no bands in their death, Psal. 73. 4. They spend their dayes in wealth or mirth, and suddenly go down to hell: therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes, Job 21. 13, 14.*

The rouzing  
of Consci-  
ence by the  
Lord, happy:

But when God in mercy moveth a mans heart to turn his eyes to view his Conscience, as he did Davids by sending Nathan to him, 2. Sam. 12. and as Christ looked back upon Peter, Luke 22. 61. and as at S. Peters preaching the Jews were pricked at the heart, Acts 2. 37. Then a hearty and happy repentance follows to salvation.

By the devil,  
wretched;

If God vouchsafe not this to wilfull sinners, then the devil keeps his deluded captive hoodwinkt, and lulled in securitie, till he have him fast, and past all likelihood of recovery: which when he findes, then he rouzes the sleeping Conscience, opens the wofull book, and compells the wretched sinner to reade it, whether he will or not, to drive him into desperation. Thus he dealt with Cain, Ahiathophel, Judas, and infinite others. Take Judas, for all. The devil put into the heart of Judas to betray his Master: and to that end, doubtlesse, he put out of his heart all care of duty and Conscience. But when he had (according to his desire) accomplished his sinne, then the devil rouzed his Conscience, and urged

as in Judas.

ged him to reade his abominable deed; he could not withdraw his thoughts from it, but might say with David (Psal. 51. 3) *My sinne is ever before me.* For what ailed Judas else: he had no disease in his body, he was able enough to trot to the Temple to the Priests and Elders, and to talk reason: his state was bettered, he had got money enough to purchase a whole field: he had got the rulers and Statesmens friendship: his fellow-disciples had lost their hearts, and hid their heads for fear of losing them too: his Master Christ was going the way of all flesh, subject to every mans hurt, no man to his, in common reason. What was there now therefore to crosse, vex, or discontent Judas? *Non potuit acerbos Conscientia stimulos & flagella perferre*, saith S. Chrysostome: nothing but this, His conscience prickt and whipt him intolerably. That was the enemy that had him now in chase, and pursued him without end or measure: he was his own tormentour, might be at peace with all men, could not with himself: he feels a worm ever gnawing him, a fire within endlessly burning him; like a man sick of a burning fever, that shifts from side to side, from bed to bed, from room to room, but findes no ease; for he carries within him that which scalds and torments him: or like a deere stricken with a barbed arrow, that runnes over hills and dales to runne away from his pain; but (*haeret lateri*) de-

Chrysost. in  
Matth. hom.  
86.

ἑαυτοῦ τρυφῶ-  
ντος.



*thalis arundo*) the deadly arrow sticks in his  
 flesh, and thogs and galls him. So it is with  
 Judas and his conscience: he can neither avoid  
 it, nor endure it. Death it self is not so painfull  
 or terrible as it: he ventures on death, and  
 hangs himself to avoid it: yet thinking death  
 to be *terminum*, he findes it but *gradum mala-*  
*rum*; he thinks it an end of his miseries, but  
 findes it an entrance into greater: one wo is past  
 and ended with him in this world; but there  
 follow a thousand in the other world that  
 will never have end. Bodily diseases may be  
 cured, or mitigated, or the sense taken away  
 by death; sores may be helped by Chirur-  
 gerie, poverrie by friends, imprisonment by  
 libertie, banishment by restoring, reproach by  
 time: but all these (were they the best in the  
 world, and in the highest degree) cannot cure  
 the Conscience afflicted with sinne. Damocles  
 sword hanging over his head ready to fall, Bal-  
 chasars hand-writing on the wall, made all the  
 musick harsh to their eares, the meats unsavou-  
 ric to their taste, their attendants ink some, and  
 all things cumbersome to their eyes: so the ap-  
 prehension of present death, or due deserved  
 vengeance seizing upon their souls, distastes  
 all the pleasures that this world can afford. A  
 fearful thing, when we have grievously offend-  
 ed the supreme Judge, that we can neither pa-  
 cifie him, nor flie from him! when he sends our  
 own Conscience as his officer to arrest us, there  
 needs

needs no other Apparitor to summon us, no Bailiffe to fetch us, no accuser to give evidence against us, no nor judge to condemn us, nor executioner to torment us: our own Conscience will do all this alone, and that in most terrible manner. Thus Judas was continually dogged by his Conscience to death. David said, *Psalm 51. 3.* his sinne was ever before him. A wofull thing! he could not look off it: nay, it was ever before God also, when he said, *vers. 7.* *Blot out mine offences:* they stood written up before God as memorials, and as hand-writings against him till blotted out. Cornelius his prayers and almes ascended up before the Lord for a memoriall, so do sinnes. Alas, that we will have our sinnes written up, when we might have our prayers and good deeds written up both in our Consciences, and before God also for memorials! when we might have Angels sent (as to Cornelius) to guide, direct, protect us, and finally to carry up our souls to heaven; (as Lazarus) we will have lying and damned spirits sent (as to Ahab) to deceive, destroy, and bring us to hell! Cain cried, *My sinne is greater then can be forgiven, and, Whosoever shall finde me will slay me.* Ah wofull! Innocent Abels blood cried from earth to heaven for vengeance on the one side: and wicked Cains conscience cried within him for vengeance on the other side. What shall the poore sinner now do?

Col. 2. 14.

Ages 10. 4.

Ages 10. 3, 4.

5, 6.  
Luk. 16. 22.

1. Kings 22.

21, 22.

Gen. 4. 13.

Gen. 4. 10, 13.

Use 1.

*Vastans con-  
scientiam.*

Oh let us first take heed we sinne not against our Conscience: for every sinne is a wound unto the soul, and the continuance in sinne is a continuall stabbing of the Conscience: and though some feel not these wounds, or grieve not at them presently (through the senselesse or numbnesse of their choked Conscience) yet the often stabbing will breed such inward festring, corruption, and putrefaction, that when the Lord toucheth it, they will roar and gnash their teeth, or grow unconsolable, and often make away themselves as Judas did. Therefore let us be carefull to keep our conscience waking, tender, sensible, easily offended with the least touch of sinne, by continuall meditation of Gods laws, and of the necessity of sanctification, and by consideration of our own frailties, and suspicion of our own inclinations: otherwise we may swallow down sinne without perceiving it, and though our Conscience stirre not now to prevent sinne, it may stirre hereafter to afflict us for it, as in Cain, Josephs brethren, David, Judas: the evil of poysons is not felt in the going down, their taste may be sweet and pleasant, but their operation afterwards deadly. Oh, if thou knewest how that flattering and amiable face of sinne, brings after it a deadly sting, punishment, and vengeance upon thee and thy posteritie, thou wouldest hate thine evil courses as hel and damnation. The providence of God

God is marvellous, but just: the just mans wa-  
ter of affliction he turns into wine most com-  
fortable and cordiall; the unjust mans wine he  
turns into water. *Sceleris est in scelere supplici-  
um*, Wickednesse becomes a scourge unto it  
self; but (Psal. 37. 37.) *Mark the perfect man,  
and behold the upright: for the end of that man is  
peace.*

But no man is perfect and upright as he  
ought to be. By Gods generall restraining  
grace we may be kept from <sup>a</sup> outward, notori-  
ous, grosse finnes, offensive to the world: but  
none <sup>b</sup> without sinne. If we finde our Consci-  
ence accuse us, and hath written up in our  
chronicle against us, not onely finnes of infir-  
mitie, but also some grosse finnes offensive to  
God and men, and to our selves: is there no re-  
medie, but (with Judas) absolute desperation  
and destruction? God forbid. Yes, (the Lord  
be praised for his great mercie) there is this  
one remedie, By sound repentance, and faith  
in Jesus Christ, to get them wiped out: for  
*the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all  
sinne*; but not without repentance on our part,  
and faith taking hold of his mercie. First let  
the Conscience be soundly wounded, and tru-  
ly sorrowfull for offending God; let the sting  
of sinne be thoroughly felt, and the wounds of  
sinne searched to the bottome, though it be  
with much pain and grief: for to skin over a  
fore before the deadly corruption be let out

Use 2.

<sup>a</sup> As Noah,  
Gen. 6. 9.  
Job, chap. 1. 1.  
Zacharie and  
Elizabeth,  
Luk. 1. 6.  
Saul, Phil. 3. 6  
<sup>b</sup> 1. Joh. 1. 8.  
Rom. 3. 23.  
Gal. 3. 22.

1. Joh. 1. 7.

March. 11. 28.

*Chrysost. in  
Psal. 50. hom.  
2. In cordis  
scripta sunt  
peccata tua:  
spongia pec-  
catorum duo-  
rum lacryme  
tue sunt:  
et audivit eorum  
virtus.*

The martyrs  
blood-shed is  
precious, to  
sinners tears.  
Peter after 3  
denials of  
Christ, by  
bitter tears,  
absterget pec-  
catum suum  
& recepit pri-  
stinam digni-  
tatem. ibid.

<sup>a</sup> Luk. 12. 61,  
62.

<sup>b</sup> Psal 6. 6.  
and 51.

Use 3.

and cleansed, is very hurtfull: and so is mini-  
string of comfort to a man not repentant: **Christ** calls them onely that labour and are  
heavily laden with the burden of their sinnes:  
such onely he came to ease, and heal. Onely  
to the repentant saith full the blessed promises  
of the Gospel belong. They onely may get  
the records of sinne cancelled, or blotted out,  
as repentant David (Psal. 51.) prayed, *Ac-  
cording to the multitude of thy mercies, O Lord,  
blot out my transgressions:* and as S. Peter coun-  
selled, Acts 3. 191 *Repent ye, and be converted,  
that your sinnes may be blotted out;* out of the  
book of Conscience: (which pricks you, Acts  
2. 37.) and out of all other Gods records  
standing as memorials against you. Thus did  
S. Peter, when Christ looked back upon him,  
and put him in minde of his sinne; *he went out  
and wept bitterly; & deprecans quod deservit,* he  
wept and wiped out his sinne. Thus David  
washed his bed, and made it swim. And the  
woman-sinner (Luk. 7. 38.) thereby procured  
that blessed absolution, *Thy sinnes are forgiven  
thee; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace;* vers.  
48. 50. and thus: *The blood of Jesus Christ cleans-  
eth us from all sinne.* 1. Joh. 1. 7.

If we have a good Conscience (either not  
having sinned against it, or being cleansed from  
our sinne by faith and repentance) so that in  
our Conscience nothing remaineth written up  
against us, happy are we: for (1. Joh. 3. 21) *If*



our heart condemne us not, then have we confidence to God, and what soever we ask of God, we shall receive. For as dutifull children receive all necessities which they ask of their earthly fathers, so shall we of our heavenly, being his children by adoption.

Rom. 8. 15,  
16, 17.  
Math. 7. 11.

But because the heart is deceitfull above measure, take heed you be not deceived: for many men brag of a good Conscience, but few men have it.

Jer. 17. 9.

S. Bernard delivereth foure sorts of Consciences: two not good, two good. 1. There is a Conscience quiet, but not good: 2. There is a Conscience neither quiet nor good: 3. There is a Conscience good, but not quiet: 4. There is a Conscience both good and quiet.

1. The Conscience quiet but not good, may be a broad or large Conscience, swallowing down any sinne without feeling: or brawny, feared, senselesse: or sleeping until God in mercie, or the devil in policie awake it. This is not good; it proceeds from ignorance, delight or custome in sinne, or want of a sound faithfull ministerie: a dangerous sicknesse, not felt, and therefore not desiring the cure.

Conscience  
quiet, but not  
good.  
See Mr. Slater  
upon Rom.

2. The Conscience neither quiet nor good, is too stirring in small matters, too senselesse of greater: such is, first, the erroneous, accusing more for the use of a ceromonie, then for disobeying the Magistrate: and secondly, the superstitious, disquieting more for breaking our fast

Conscience  
neither quiet  
nor good.

fast on a fish day, or omitting a few *Ave Marias*, then for drunkennes, cozening our neighbours, or for treasons, rebellions, massacres of Princes and people: but thirdly and especially the despairing conscience, which for sinne against God afflicts too grievously and endlessly, admitting no comfort of Gods mercie & Christs merits. This Conscience through the devils strong delusion, or their own despair ( if so it continue ) is past physick. These two are in the two extreames, the one too carelesse and fearlesse, the other too carefull and fearfull; both dangerously evil.

Conscience  
good, but not  
quiet,

2. Sam. 24.  
10, 17.

Psal. 73. 1.  
Psal. 42.  
and 43.

3. The Conscience good, but not quiet, accuseth for breach of Gods law, and fills the heart with sorrows and fears, yet grieveth more at his fault then at his punishment; and therefore tends to good, and seeks for comfort. So Davids heart smote him for numbring the people ( as trusting to them rather then to God ) and prayed that he might be punished and they saved. This is a good Conscience, and is known by these signes. First, except in the violence of temptation, it holds the principle, *Yet God is loving unto Israel;* and, *O my soul, why art thou so disquieted within me? hope in God, for I will yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God:* And he seeks to the Lord in good time for reconciliation and pardon: as David, Psal. 51. 1, 8, 12. &c. And he resolves with Job, chap. 13. 15. though  
the

the Lord should kill him, yet to put his trust in him. Secondly, he is carefull to use the means, and hungerly hangs upon the ministerie of the word: no physician in the deadliest sicknesse more welcome, then he that declares Gods mercie to one thus afflicted: he receives him as the angel of God, even as Christ Jesus, more deare to him then his own eyes. *Oh how beautifull are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* Thirdly, he continues in the wayes of Gods commandments usually with more stricnesse and zeal then others lesse troubled. And this Conscience is blessed with a happy successe; for such men are now in their physick, they <sup>a</sup> hunger after comfort, and shall be satisfied. These <sup>b</sup> bruised reeds Christ will not break, nor quench this smoking flax. Into these <sup>c</sup> wounded and half-dead travellers, the good Samaritane will poure the oyl & wine of his mercie. These are they whom our Saviour so lovingly calls, even them that <sup>d</sup> labour and are heave laden with the burden of their sinnes, to give them ease and rest. Therefore as they said to blinde Bartimeus by the way side, <sup>e</sup> *Be of good comfort, for he calleth thee:* so I may say to all afflicted consciences labouring for pardon and peace, Be of good comfort, Jesus calleth you.

4. The Conscience both good and quiet, is that which after due knowledge of his own  
H sinne,

Gal. 4. 15.

Rom. 10. 15.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 5. 4, 6.<sup>b</sup> Matt. 12. 20.<sup>c</sup> Luk. 10.

30, 34.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. 11. 28.<sup>e</sup> Mark 10. 49Conscience  
both good  
and quiet.

f Rom. 3. 1.  
and 8. 1, 14,  
15, 16.  
g Prov. 15. 15.  
h 1. Joh. 3. 21.  
i Rom. 14. 8.

k Rom. 8. 28.

l Rom. 8. 18.

m 1. Joh. 4. 17

n Tim. 4. 8.

o Cor. 1. 12.

p Luk. 12. 32.

q 1. Pet. 1. 4.

r 1 Cor. 2. 9.

August. in  
Psalm. 26.  
Narrat. 2.

sinne, repentance, faith, reconciliation, findes  
and feels peace with God: this is a continuall  
feast, the Christians jewel worth all the world,  
heaven upon earth. This ministreth comfort  
and joy both in life and death: for whether we  
live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we  
die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or  
die, we are the Lords. All things shall work to-  
gether for good to us. Our sufferings in this  
world are not worthy to be compared to the glorie  
prepared for us in the next. We have com-  
fort in all judgements, even in the expectation  
of the great day. Our inheritance is a king-  
dome, incorruptible, undefiled, immortal. Eye  
hath not seen, nor eare heard, neither have entered  
into the heart of man, the things which God hath  
prepared for them that love him. Therefore  
when we have beaten our brains, and imagi-  
ned the greatest joy and felicitie that our  
hearts can think; yet we may still say, This  
is not it; for all a man can possibly think,  
comes short of it, as S. Augustine speaketh.  
Such troubled, and such quiet Conscience  
es are both good: the one feels the Lord is  
strong, the other sweet: the one in sharpnesse,  
the other in sweetnesse runs the wayes of  
Gods commandments: the one is in the bat-  
tell, the other in the victorie; the one in the  
way to peace, the other in possession; the  
one feeds hungerly, the other is satisfied:  
both are blessed.

Now

Now to procure and preserve a good Conscience, I commend unto you these means:

First, every morning before we rise, to consider (as good husbands do) what businessse we have to do that day, what company, what temptations we are to meet withall; then to look into our law-book of Conscience (or Gods word) how to carrie our selves purely and profitably therein. This must be our <sup>a</sup> lamp and light, our <sup>b</sup> delight and counsel-  
<sup>d</sup>lour, to make us wiser then our <sup>c</sup> enemies,  
<sup>d</sup>teachers, <sup>e</sup>ancients, <sup>f</sup>wise as serpents, inno-  
cent as doves, the onely way to <sup>g</sup> cleanse our  
wayes, and make them <sup>h</sup>prosper. This, as Da-  
vid said, was the blessed mans practise <sup>i</sup> day  
and night. Shall the wicked <sup>k</sup> devise mischief  
upon their beds, and shall not the religious  
meditate upon goodnesse to be performed,  
sinne to be avoided, Conscience to be kept  
cleare? Shall men studie upon the Princes  
laws to live securely here, and not Gods peo-  
ple upon Gods laws to live happily for ever?  
God commandeth, *Thou shalt talk of my laws  
when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, or  
sittest in thy house, or walkest in the way: they shall  
be in thy heart, hand, forehead, posts, and gates.*  
Therefore let us learn and consider our dutie  
beforehand, and make vows to perform it, re-  
solving never to be withdrawn from it by fear,  
favour, lucre, pleasure, or any earthly thing;  
and pray to God to give us his grace and Spi-

Means to  
procure and  
preserve a  
good Consci-  
ence.

<sup>a</sup> Psal. 119.  
105.  
<sup>b</sup> ver. 24.  
<sup>c</sup> ver. 98.  
<sup>d</sup> ver. 99.  
<sup>e</sup> ver. 100.  
<sup>f</sup> Matt. 10. 16.  
<sup>g</sup> Psal. 119.  
2. 11.  
<sup>h</sup> Josh. 7. 7, 8.  
<sup>i</sup> Psal. 1. 2.  
<sup>k</sup> Psal. 36. 4.

Deut. 6. 7, 8.



rit for constancie, heedfulnesse, and good successe therein.

Psal. 119. 59.

Mnd' ū moy  
ma d' xōiōn  
m' d' uian  
m' d' d' d' d'  
Piply d' d' d'  
civōy d' d' d'  
p' d' d' d' d'  
d' d' d' d' d'  
Pythag. aur.  
carm.  
Chrysost. in  
Psul. 50. hom.  
2. Antequam  
veniat tibi  
somnia, pro-  
fer in medium  
codicem, Con-  
scientiam tu-  
am, & remi-  
niscere pecca-  
ta tua, si quid  
in verbo, sa-  
lūo, cogitati-  
one peccasti.

Secondly, at night before we sleep, let us look upon our chronicle, and search in that book of our Conscience what we have said or done that day. *I thought upon my wayes* (saith David) *and turned my feet unto thy testimonies: I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.* The golden verses of Pythagoras taught naturall men, Not to admit sleep into their eyes, till they had thrice run over all they had done that day, that they might detest and amend the evil, delight in the good and continue in it. S. Chrysostome teacheth the same to Christians: *Before the approach of sleep* (saith he) *produce thy book, thy Conscience, and remember wherein thou hast offended in word, deed, or thought.* And Eusebius Emislenus saith, *Let every soul speak to it self in the secret of his heart, How have I spent this day? without sinne, without envie, backbiting, murmuring? have I profited my self, or any other by good deeds, or edification? have I not lied, sworn amisse, yeilded to my lusts, done hurt to some body? who shall restore me this day, which I have lost in vanitie, or spent in evil? Optimus ille Trapezita* (saith Climachus) *He keeps his books evenest* (his layings out, and his comings in) *that every night books all his receits and expenses, and makes all straight before he sleep.* We should so search our Consciences,

sciences, and judge our selves without partialitie, that when we come before the Judge, he may say, I need not judge this man, for he hath judged himself already, 1. Cor. 11. 31. And as David vowed, *I will not climbe up into my bed, nor suffer mine eyes to sleep, &c. untill I finde out a place for the temple of the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob:* So let us resolve, I will not sleep till I make my body the temple of the holy Ghost; I will not rest till I have swept and cleansed it from all sinfull filthinesse, as Christ did the temple at Jerusalem: that I may sleep with a clean heart to my God, and rest confident of safetie under his protection, saying with David, *Lord, thou hast (now) put gladnesse in my heart: I will (now) lay me down in peace, and take my rest; for thou, Lord, onely makest me dwell in safety.*

Thirdly, when our seventh day, dedicated to Gods service, approacheth, as God looked back upon all his works of the six dayes, so let us look back upon ours: that if we finde all well, we may blesse God for it; if any thing still amisse, reconcile our selves to God more thoroughly, and use this seventh day (as it was ordained) for sanctification, for deprecation, for information, for excitation and stirring us up to all good duties, yea and for almes, and resolution of restitution for all wrongs done by us, and pardoning offences done against us.

H 3

Thus

*Calo descendit Iudaea. Furor. Domine novum me, novum te. Bern. Psal. 132. 3, 4, 5.*

1. Cor. 6. 19.

Matt. 21. 12,

13.

Psal. 4. 8, 9.

2<sup>d</sup> Kings 5.

1. Cor. 5. 17.

This is written by a worthy Minister, Mr. Jeremy Dyke, in his Epistle dedicatorie before his brothers book, entitled *The decestfulnesse of Mans heart.*

Thus having washed our selves seven times in the seven dayes of the week (as Naaman did seven times in Jordan, by the Prophets appointment) the leprosie of our finnes may be cleansed away, and our Consciences (as the flesh of his bodie) become pure and tender (as of an innocent childe) to our incomparable comfort. And these things we should renew and perform most exactly in our preparation to the holy Communion, and at the beginning of the new year, looking back into the old, how we have served God, how he hath preserved us, and wherein we have offended, looking forward into the new, with purpose to be new creatures, as *old things are past away, and all things become new*, 2. Cor. 5. 17.

All this is as possible as it is profitable. See it exemplified in an honourable man, an exemplarie Christian, the late young Lord *Harrington*: (be it ever remembred, for Gods glory, his honour, and our imitation) His course was, to keep a catalogue or diarie of his finnes against God, and every night, or the next morning to review the faults of the day past; every seventh morning or night before, to review the faults of the whole week; and at the end of every moneth, to surview the whole moneths transgression: All this, the better to know and humble himself, and renew the practise of his repentance. And the day before the receiving of the holy Communion,

munion, he alwayes humbled himself with fasting, prayer, and confession.

The Lord of heaven finde us so alwayes occupied, that at our death we may receive that blessed welcome for the well-employing of our times and talents, *Well done thou*

*Math. 23. 21.*

*good and faithfull servant, thou hast been faithfull in little, I will make thee ruler over much: Enter into thy Masters joy.*

FINIS.

